

Agriculture and Husbandry

Coachella Dates

Dates—golden-brown, luscious, richly-flavored fruit of the date palm—are now being harvested in the Coachella Valley, center of the California date growing industry. This season the Valley's crop has been estimated at 2,000,000 pounds; already shipments are being made to all corners of the earth, already are Californians purchasing the fresh fruit, serving them as delicacies healthful, tasty, refreshing.

This season's crop is in excellent condition. Although the summer was one of the hottest on record, although the heat was accompanied by much humidity, the dates suffered no damage other than some splitting. Seedlings, a few early varieties, have been on the market for some weeks already; coming in great quantity now are the Deglet Noors.

To simplify harvesting of the date crop, picking platforms were given a trial last year. These were used on old trees at the Haywood, Schell date properties near Indio. Of such great value did they prove that other growers are now using them; they bid fair to become standard equipment when palms are too big for ladder-picking.

Two new cleaning machines have been installed at the Deglet Noor Date Growers' Association plant at Indio; other machinery has been prepared for the season's output. In charge is D. H. Mitchell.

This is an age of specialization. To do many things, to do them all well, is an impossibility when competition is so strong, when rivals are so numerous. Results: Individuals, nations and communities determine their strongest assets, capitalize them, emphasize them, concentrate on them, discarding conflicting interests and aims.

Identically suited through it is to the raising of many crops, Coachella Valley residents are to strive to be too diverse. Certain products, unsuccessful in many areas, flourish there; on them Coachella Valley plans to concentrate, producing the finest species, the rarest delicacies.

Of the three permanent crops of Coachella Valley, the date is one. Although they can be raised in parts of the Salt River and Imperial Valley, they grow to best advantage in Coachella Valley. Too small are the other areas; too unsuited to the exacting climatic demands of the discriminating date. Admirably well adapted, date-growing are the soil, and climate of the Coachella region; the sensitive Deglet Noor, the rare Menaker date grow vigorously there.

Though the increase in date acreage is necessarily slow (like walnuts, they take long to mature), Coachella Valley plans to place all other communities as a date-growing center; to place this valuable crop on a non-competitive basis.

Grapefruit, superior in quality, sweet in flavor, flourishes in the Coachella Valley; they and early grapes, ready for the Los Angeles market three weeks before all others, are to be the second and third permanent crops of the Coachella Valley. Envied will be this locality above all others when only these three crops are raised, when the highly competitive products have been eliminated, when all growers will concentrate only on the non-competitive date, the sweet grape fruit, the earliest grape.

Senate Inquiry

When President Hoover surveyed the farm situation immediately after his inauguration, saw that capable men were needed to diagnose the details of the problem and to decide upon the adequate remedies, he organized a Federal Farm Board; upon it he placed men whom he considered capable of expert analysis, keen discrimination, sage reasoning. (See News Review, Sept. 23-29).

Before this Board can definitely exercise its powers, however, its personnel must be examined by the Senate, its individual appointments ratified. More than two months ago, the Board's organization was effected; last week at Washington the Senate Agricultural Committee began its inquiry of the personal selections of President Hoover.

Seventeen members comprise the Agricultural Committee; 15 were present at the first session of the hearing. Of the 17, more than



COACHELLA VALLEY DATES READY FOR HARVEST

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a few had already proffered possible solutions to the farm problems; several had already evinced scepticism regarding the capabilities, integrity, sincerity, of the Federal Farm Board.

First to be questioned was Federal Farm Board Chairman Alexander Legge, former head of the International Harvester Company, who refused a salary of \$100,000 per year to accept the President's appointment.

When committee members expressed displeasure because the Farm Board had not undertaken stabilization of wheat and cotton, Chairman Legge declared that he believed a marketing organization was the first essential; each potential agency could best attend to the stabilization of its own particular crop.

In answer to direct questions, Chairman Legge told the Senate Agricultural Committee (15 out of 17 members were present) that he had long been connected with agricultural pursuits, principally live-stock; that he held a small fraction of one per cent of stock in the Harvester Company; that he had no connection whatsoever with any grain exchange; that he owned some shares in railroad companies.

Questioned also was Board Member Charles S. Wilson of Hall, N. Y., representing apple growers as well as general agricultural interests. He told the Senate investigators that he believed the \$500,000 appropriation for farm relief would prove insufficient; that Congress would be asked for additional funds.

When Senate Agricultural Committee Member Carroway criticized the slowness of action of President Hoover's Board, Board Member Wilson upheld its deliberate approach to the farm problems, declared hasty action would be worthless.

Senator Wheeler accused the Farm Federal Board of lending money to the California Sun-Maid Raisin Growers' Association, at the same time refusing financial assistance to independent California growers. Apple-Connoisseur Wilson denied this, said the entire California raisin industry shared in the loan.

Recalled for additional quizzing, Chairman Alexander Legge was asked what restrictions the Federal Farm Board has encountered in its preparatory investigations. Legge replied there had been none; said that if any were encountered, the Board would appeal to Congress for more power.

Investigations of its personnel once completed, the Federal Farm Board will find several requests for assistance awaiting its jurisdiction. One will be an application from the California Peach and Fig Growers' Association for approximately \$250,000 with which

to buy plans and equipment.

Inferred President E. I. Feemster: Should the Federal funds be granted, they would be used to simplify the intricacies of the two corporations, one California, one Delaware, the former marketing, the latter manufacturing, which comprise the fig, peach growers' organization. The \$250,000 would be paid by the California Corporation to the Delaware company for the plants; the Delaware corporation would return the funds in liquidation of its obligations to the California group.

Opened Doors

Ripening walnuts on heavily loaded trees last week caused many walnut associations to re-open their doors for the coming season.

At Santa Susana, the Simi Valley Walnut Growers Association saw a big season ahead. Therefore it built a new processing plant, spent \$47,000, established many new mechanical features including an elevator belt which carries three grades of nuts at once.

Walnut harvesting at Santa Paula was begun last week. At the same time the doors of the Santa Paula Walnut Association packing house were opened to receive what is expected to be a 2300-ton crop.

Largest unit in the State, the Saticoy Walnut Association also opened last week to take care of an expected record crop, even though 10 per cent of it has been lost due to excessive heat.

The San Fernando Valley Walnut Growers Association began operations last week with a twenty-four hour working schedule which will remain in force until the entire crop is gathered in and stored. Many new groves bearing for the first time have brought in a record crop for San Fernando, approximately 1000 tons.

At Garden Grove a large walnut crop is predicted. The Garden Grove Walnut Growers Association was opened last week to receive the early nuts of what may be the second largest crop ever produced in that district.

Many another walnut district also began harvesting last week, and with the harvesting, many other associations also opened their doors.

In such districts as Santa Paula, Chino, Ontario and Pomona, the walnut husk fly is keeping growers awake with worry. In Orange County the codling moth has caused almost as much trouble as the husk fly.

Tomato Cannery

Popularity of canned tomatoes as a domestic food was lately proved by the records of the Fernando Canning Company at San Fernando. Each day of work at

the canning company this season results in the canning of 140 tons of tomatoes, twice as much as any other canning company in Southern California. At the end of the present season, company owners expect to have packed almost 250,000 cases of tomatoes. Most of the crop is coming in from San Fernando Valley with additional supplies arriving from Simi Valley.

Last week at La Habra, growers, looking over their crops, estimated a shipment of tomatoes from that district of about 70 cars.

Lettuce Trend

In Southern California where the weather is warm, the tendency of eaters is to get away from hot, heavy foods. For lunch, many a hitherto heavy food eater coming from colder climes, has substituted salad. No salad is complete without lettuce trimmings; many a salad is composed of large quantities of lettuce. As a trimming, lettuce adds grace to otherwise ugly, unappetizing foods. As a food, doctors recommend it for good health. Therefore lettuce growers have increased their planting, markets, sales for this product.

Lettuce planting this season in Imperial Valley, near Brawley, will amount to more than 35,000 acres, a 40 per cent increase over last year. From the combined districts of San Joaquin, Imperial and Sacramento Valleys, approximately one hundred cars will be shipped daily. In San Fernando Valley a huge lettuce crop has been planted. Growers and retailers all over California have found lettuce a profitable and not difficult product to handle.

Bad Meat

In many a California city, town, housewives have been buying meat for dinner, not knowing whether it was good or bad, because there are no rigid regulations of inspection to protect them. But, alarmed at advertisements offering to buy livestock "good or bad," and stating that buyers will pay cash for such animals, whether they are passable for inspection or not, community leaders have taken action. Many a town has passed resolutions to protect its residents against bad or inferior meat. To date, nine counties and sixty-seven cities have passed prohibitory ordinances.

Last week from Sacramento came news that a State-wide inspection of meat-food products was imminent. At last, this was the forecast offered by the State Department of Agriculture.

The department reported that nearly 1,000,000 animals were inspected last year as compared with 147,000 in 1922. A total of 6,073 animals were condemned during the last twelve months, as unfit for human consumption.

Small Limas

When lima beans are screened, cleaned, in the process of sorting and grading, the smallest of them fall down to the bottom of the screens. Then they are laid aside and sold for a cheap price as "screenings." Last fortnight, however, the California Lima Bean Growers Association announced it had been making experiments in reconditioning and selling the smaller beans and other makes.

In the reconditioning of these smaller beans, formerly sold as screenings, the association believes it has developed a market whereby growers can realize more profits. The association's plan is to pool all the small screened limas so that growers will receive an average good price. This is similar to the manner in which the association handles the regular stock. A lima bean grower looked upon the plan with great favor.

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